582 were Tanala prisoners of war whose antecedents were well known
567 If the slave came of a good family, the fact that he or she was a slave carried little social stigma and the children would be accepted as equals by their relatives.

In unions of commoners and slaves there was no marriage ceremony. If a common man took a slave woman as a concubine, her [585] status was not changed unless a child was born to them. After this the father was in honor bound to buy her and their child from her owner. He would usually free both of them by calling together his family and pronouncing a curse on anyone who thenceforth considered them as slaves. If he did this, the child inherited his gens and rank. If he failed to do it the child and mother remained slaves and might be sold by his heirs after his death.

If a woman who had been captured and enslaved bore a child to her master, her relatives might remove her slave status by paying a partial ransom. This was called *lavajolanpanana* ("to replace carrying the bamboo") in reference to the long bamboo bottles used by slave women for carrying water. It was usually about half the [435] woman's market value as a slave, perhaps four to six head of cattle. The payment of this ransom not only freed the woman and her offspring, but gave her an honorable position in the household equal to that of any of the regularly married wives.

Marriages between common women and slave men were less frequent, but by no means unknown. Middle-aged widows who [587] wished to be only wives frequently took slave husbands. The first step was to buy the man, if he belonged to someone else. The woman then made a feast, killed an ox and distributed the meat to her relatives, and announced that this man was henceforth free and her husband. The wife had a whip hand in such unions. The husband, even though officially free, could not return to his own people. Moreover, if he behaved badly or paid attention to other women, his wife [584] could reduce him to slavery again and even sell him.

567 Children of common women and slave men took the gens and rank of the mother. However, if the father was a Tanala and had been a man of good family, or a noble, before his enslavement, the children might go back to his people when they were grown and could legitimately claim his gens and rank.

RELATIONSHIP TERMS

601 The Tanala system of relationship terms is comparatively simple. It was impossible to get an authoritative list of the terms used by

pregnant. To do so will make delivery more difficult. This rule is 843
strictly observed and infraction entitles the wife to divorce with [SPK]
alimony. A man who breaks it will be denounced by the village as
cruel and bad at heart and is likely to be suspected of sorcery, as in
keeping with his general character. In addition, the husband must
not cut out the septa of a bamboo to make a water bottle, or the
child will have dysentery, or put a handle in an axe, which will give
the child a birth mark, or hide a spade, which will give the child a
hair lip.

The pregnant woman must not carry ginger root or a variety of
bean with a black eye, in the front of her dress. The root will cause
the child to suffer from polydactyly, the beans will make it have
black spots on its skin. These taboos appear to be common to all the
Tanala Menabe, but there are no doubt a number of others peculiar
to various genies.

BIRTH

Among the Tanala Menabe the mother, as soon as labor com- 844
mences, goes to some vacant house in the village ward which
belongs to her lineage. If there is none, she goes to her own or her
father's dwelling. The doors and windows are shut and no man is
allowed to enter. There are a few professional midwives, but these
are only called in when delivery is difficult. Usually she is assisted
by old female relatives. She removes all her clothing and kneels,
grasping a stick or pendant rope. The attendants must not speak
until after the afterbirth has been delivered. Then they begin to
shout and clap their hands crying, "*Vita, vita!*" ("Finished!") The
male relatives have gathered outside the house and when they hear
this they begin to clap their hands and sing. In the old days guns
would be fired.

The umbilical cord is cut very long and tied up to the child's neck
with a string twisted from bark cloth. A male relative of the father
takes the placenta and buries it deeply just outside and in front of
the door of the birth house.

Immediately after the birth both mother and child are bathed in 846
cold water. A deep, sloping bed of grass is piled up in the southeast
corner of the house, between the fireplace and the wall. The mother
is laid on this with her head and shoulders high and her legs drawn
up. A large fire is built and kept up for eight days and nights.
During this time the mother remains on the bed, leaving it only for
natural needs. The Tanala can give no reason for this "roasting,"
which is a widespread Indonesian practice.

684 of its cattle. Incest is equally serious if it has been committed
[92] unwittingly, through the marriage of two persons who did not know that they were within the proscribed degrees of relationship. It is thought that such people will have no children or that, if children are born, they will die in infancy. If a relationship is discovered, the marriage is dissolved at once, even if it is of long standing, and the incest ceremony performed.

Among the Tanala Menabe the ceremony for incest is as follows: The guilty man provides an ox for sacrifice. This is killed at the village sacred place and the stomach taken out and cut into a thin, continuous strip, like a thong. The guilty parties are then seated side by side and the stomach-thong wound around the necks of both, drawing their heads together. The contents of the stomach are smeared over their heads and shoulders. The sacrificial parts of the meat are taken and grilled over an open fire. The sacrificial priest of the gens places the meat on the altar and invokes the gods by the usual formula except that, before repeating their names, he shouts "I call!" three times. After repeating the gods' names he says: "There are the two people who are guilty. They have killed an ox to efface their sin, as you have directed. It is for that reason that we make the sacrifice." He then invites the gods to eat and, after an interval, sends them away, calling the ancestors and going through the same formula. The rest of the ceremony is like that for ordinary sacrifices. The Tanala Ikongo are said to have an incest ceremony also, but no details were available.

BERDACHES

938 In both divisions of the Tanala there are a few men who have adopted the female role. They are very rare and none of them were known personally to my informants. Such individuals are called *sorombory*. They wear the woman's regular costume and hairdressing and practice the woman's industries, such as weaving. The natives say that such men show feminine traits from birth and their attitude toward them is entirely neutral. They are neither despised nor considered marked out for any special activity. Informants had never heard of a *sorombory* acting as a medicine-man or showing supernatural powers, but said there was no rule against their becoming medicine-men.

I believe that *sorombory* exist in all the Malagasy tribes, but the natives are reticent in regard to them, especially with the missionaries. Among the Bara, who adjoin the Tanala on the south-

he can afford it, and tell him that she is bearing his child. The father will then consent to the marriage, to avoid scandal. Such conduct is considered reprehensible and the relatives on both sides will scold the couple. However, the trouble soon blows over and has no permanent effect on the social status of the pair. 589

Although marriages rarely begin in romantic attachments, affection between married people is common and seems to increase with age. Quarrels between husband and wife are rare. They are drawn together by their love for their children and by their common economic interests. Divorce, although very easy, seems to be much less frequent than among ourselves. 593 [586]

The degrees of relationship within which marriage is proscribed have been discussed under Social Organization. However, the force of the proscription varies. In addition to the absolutely forbidden degrees, there are certain relatives whose marriage is considered a semi-incest, likely to have bad results. This applies particularly to the descendants of two brothers. To remove the danger it is thought well to perform a ceremony to remove the ban. 582

Among the Ikongo this ban-lifting ceremony is called *fafy*. The man provides one ox if the relationship is remote or two if it is close. The animals are thrown and tied on the east side of the father's house, with their heads toward the east. The head of the lineage cuts their throats, invoking the gods and ancestors and explaining the reason for the sacrifice. The sacrificial parts are cooked and offered and the rest of the meat cut up and distributed raw to the members of both families involved. The man takes the heart and squeezes a few drops of blood from it on the forehead of the girl. She then takes it and does the same to him. After this the ban is lifted and they will have a prosperous life together. 582 [583]

Among the Menabe the ban-lifting ceremony is only compulsory when a man marries the daughter of his mother's sister's son, but it is thought advisable when he marries his father's brother's daughter or granddaughter. In ancient times an ox was killed and the couple sprinkled with the blood. This ceremony is now obsolete and the ritual has been forgotten. At present, the head of the lineage puts water in a wooden dish with a silver bracelet and scrapings of the *Asomanga* (see Prayer and Sacrifice). He asperges the couple with the water three or six times, usually six, counting as he does so. He then invokes the gods and ancestors and announces: "These two [giving the names] wish to marry. They are forced to this by love and by the difficulty of finding mates of the allowed degrees.

Women seem to be quite as much in favor of polygyny as men. While they often become jealous of other wives, the practical advantages of the arrangement are considerable. There is no hired labor and slaves were never very numerous, so the housewife has always been confronted by an acute servant problem. After a woman has been married a few years and has small children to look after, she will often urge her husband to marry another wife to lighten her labor. Husbands may, of course, take plural wives on their own initiative, but before doing so they must have the consent of all their previous wives. The domestic arrangements in polygynous families have been discussed in the chapter on Social Organization.

DIVORCE

Divorce is easy and fairly common. It is not accompanied by any ceremony. Among the Manabe men can divorce at will, but the wife has a claim to one-third of the husband's property, exclusive of land. She retains this even if she has been guilty of flagrant misconduct.

A woman can divorce her husband either with or without cause. If she has no cause, she simply returns to her own family, who will receive and protect her. In this case she forfeits all property rights. Divorces with cause are granted by the village council and entitle the wife to one-third of her husband's property, land excepted. The recognized causes for divorce are: 1. Adultery during the wife's pregnancy. 2. Adultery when the husband has previously been detected and forgiven on a promise of reform. 3. Marriage of a plural wife without the offended wife's permission. 4. Spending a wife's day with another wife. This is considered more serious than ordinary adultery. 5. Severe mistreatment resulting in maiming or permanent injury.

In some quarters the extent of the injuries justifying a divorce is specified at the time of marriage. The Zafindiamanana say, in the marriage address: "We let you have our daughter, but her eyes, her hair and her limbs do not belong to you. You may use her and have her work for you, but if you put out her eye, or pull out her hair, or break one of her limbs, she returns to us."

In general, it is considered bad form for a woman to divorce her husband, even with cause. The village council will reprimand her and liken her to a crowing hen, although it cannot refuse to grant her the divorce if she insists. Usually the matter is settled out of court, the husband making her a public apology and gift.

In case of divorce, the children, other than nursing infants, always remain with the father. This, coupled with the wife's alimony rights, does much to make divorces unpopular. Among the Menabe, the first husband's permission is not necessary for the remarriage of a divorced woman, but propriety requires that she allow some months to elapse before entering a new union.

Among the Ikongo the wife has no rights in the husband's property even if she has been the injured party, but the children can choose with which parent they will remain. Women cannot divorce without cause. The same causes are recognized as among the Menabe, except that adultery after a promise of reform is not accepted. In addition, divorces are granted for striking a child after the wife has protested, insulting the wife's parents, and making love to the wife's mother, either her real mother or one of her father's other wives. If a woman has been divorced for adultery, her first husband's permission is necessary for her remarriage. If she wishes to marry her lover, the husband may forbid it, out of spite. Her family will intercede for her and the lover will try to win his consent with gifts. If the woman has divorced her husband, or has been divorced for any cause other than adultery, his consent is not necessary.

REMARRIAGE

Widows and widowers usually remarry unless they are too old. The ceremonies in the case of a young widow are the same as those for a first marriage. Middle-aged widows will often go to live with men without any ceremony and do not seem to suffer socially. It is felt that they are old enough to know their own minds and the family is usually glad to have someone else support them. A widow may not marry within a year of her husband's death. There is no fixed time for widowers, but it is considered very bad form for them to marry within less than six months.

Both widows and widowers are expected to ask the permission of the deceased spouse's family before remarrying. In the case of widowers, this is only a polite formality, intended to honor the dead. The same is true for childless widows. In the case of widows with children, the first husband's relatives cannot absolutely forbid the marriage, but may oppose it if they think the new husband will not make a good stepfather. They will insist that the children be left with them, or that the new husband come and live in their ward.